

**General Plan 2020**  
**Interest Group Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**August 5, 2002**  
*Revised October 8, 2002*

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**Interest Group Committee:**

Al Stehly	Farm Bureau
Alexandra Elias	American Planning Association
Bonnie Gendron	Back Country Coalition
Bruce Tabb	Environmental Development
Carolyn Chase	Coalition for Transportation Choices
Dan Silver	Endangered Habitats League
Diane Coombs	Citizen Coordinate for Century 3
Eric Bowlby	Sierra Club
Greg Lambron	Helix Land Company
Jim Whalen	Alliance for Habitat Conservation
Karen Messer	Buena Vista Audubon Society
Liz Higgins	SD Association of Realtors
Mike Stepner	SD Regional Economic Development Corporation
Phil Pryde	SD Audubon
Thure Stedt	Save Our Land Values

**Public at Large:**

Brent McDonald	Caltrans
Carol Leone	
Charlene Ayers	
Dave Shibley	
Devore Smith	Sierra Club
Dutch Van Dierendonck	Ramona CPG
Eric Larson	Farm Bureau
J. Tanalski	
Jeanne Pagett	
Julie Bugbee	Lakeside
Kristine Preston	
Lael Montgomery	
Mary Allison	USDRIC
Mike Thometz	MERIT
Paul B. Etzel	SDSU/Astronomy
Patti Krebs	Guejito
Rich Rudolf	
Ruth Potter	
Tracy Morgan Hollingworth	Public Policy Strategies
Valerie Stallings	St. Vincent de Paul

**County Staff:**

Karen Scarborough (DPLU, group facilitator)  
Gary Pryor (DPLU)  
Ivan Holler (DPLU)  
LeAnn Carmichael (DPLU)  
Michelle Yip (DPLU)  
Tom Harron (County Counsel)

### **Non-Agenda Item: Proxy Votes –**

- Barker and Johnson to Stepner.

### **Agenda Item I: Logistics –**

a, b, c) Minutes for May 28; June 11; and July 9, 2002

- Bowlby stated he had changes to the June 11<sup>th</sup> minutes and requested to come back to this item at the end of the meeting.

### **Agenda Item II: Working Copy Distribution Map –**

a) Continue Discussion

- To start the discussion, Scarborough felt it would be helpful to hear, from the planning director, a reminder of what the general plan is, what altitude we are looking at this, and the details of the model that brings us the numbers, pictures, and colors that we are looking at today.
- Pryor mentioned that a lot of questions have come up about groundtruthing and whether we can accommodate the growth and if we have enough housing units. Stated that the model does nothing more than predicts the amount of population that can be accommodated. The model recognizes the different densities that we have attached to an area and the geographic amount of land that is represented by those different designations of density. From this standpoint, it would appear that it is a flat map and everything is buildable, but we know that that is not the case. In order to get the prediction as accurate as we could, we looked at different constraints, for example, built and rural lands. The built lands are areas where you have parcelization with rooftops, it is an area that is already built and thus does not have further subdivision of land. We looked at floodplains and wetlands and assumed we will no longer build in those areas. We looked at publicly owned land that is not available for development. These are what we call constraints and every one of these things represents something that would reduce the amount of land that would be available for production of housing, commercial, and industrial. Those constraints were then factored into the modeling process.
- Stedt stated that people in the community do not understand that these factors are taken out to derive the population number and feels this creates a disconnect between the assumption of what people are going to be getting and what the density says. Stated that landowners are concerned that this is part of a hidden deduction or downzone since it is not obvious in the process. Pryor replied that that is the reason we wanted to review this because the model does nothing more than predict the population. What we are trying to do is be sure that in the general plan, we have enough land area for the kinds of activity we are talking about, which is at least a 20 year supply for housing, and commercial and industrial that goes along with it. Pryor added that these constraints are like RPO and if a landowner wants to know what they have, they inventory the slope, wetlands, etc; and they are up against a different problem under the current code because the proposed designation is not density but rather parcel size. Stedt stated that SOLV looks at this as a double taking because this represents in many cases a downzone from what is on the ground today and then you begin applying the constraints so you take once from the density map and then the constraints. Pryor replied that the decision on this quantum assumption, that once you apply the zoning classification, to turn around and go back and subtract further on the density, has not been made yet. He added that RPO and BMO were things that were drafted at a time in the County when everything was based on parcels. When you start to deal with parcels, you cannot deal with density; you cannot move the lot or buildings on your parcel of land because you are stuck with 2, 4, or 8 acre lot sizes.
- Silver stated that the 660,000 number is a low number because in actuality an area may not be as constrained as assumed and so it is a very conservative estimate. He asked to what extent does that real world actuality come in since the County will allow for a lower density based on marketability, community concerns, etc. Pryor replied that we anticipate there will be landowners out there actively farming but choose not to develop even if we put a density on it; we have others that might be in trust or family holdings where they do not want to develop. So the approach here is conservative enough that we have accommodated for that to take place and this list of criteria, i.e.

the floodplains at 100% protection, is ultra conservative because we know we are going to have some development take place in floodplains.

❖ **Correction made at the October 8, 2002 meeting:** *The number in reference should read 670,000 and not 660,000.*

- Stehly asked if the slope constraints could be mitigated by clustering to avoid losing yield. Pryor responded that the current parcel size can actually reduce on site, case for case, and by setting the density, we are predetermining what these limitations are in the computer, so we have a set density that becomes the yield that you should be able to get on that lot if you design it correctly. Stehly asked if you could design it to get more. Pryor replied that you cannot because it is a maximum number of units; the only way to get more would be to go through a GPA and increase the maximum allowable units.
- Stehly asked what stops you from getting your units into the areas you cannot build if you cluster. Pryor stated that you probably could in a real world sense but again, this is a predictive model to predict population. He added that standards are going to be critical as to how you apply it.
- Stedt stated that it is hard for him to imagine the mapping without coupling the standards that apply. In this case, when you are talking about 180 du's, you are really talking about 1 du/5.5 ac so he wants the map to reflect what you get. Added that he does not feel it is impractical to do groundtruthing as it is another level of effort where these things come together. Pryor responded that the general plan serves as the blueprint for the future for how the county is going to develop because it is not just the development community that has things that it is trying to build in terms of supplying market demand for housing commercial and industrial; the local government needs to know where the growth is going to go so we can start to program streets, sewer, and water (if we are running municipal utilities). Stedt felt that the essential problem is that we are disconnected from the standards; in some ways, it is being applied to the modeling but is not reflected in the map. Pryor stated that all this model does is predict the population numbers; it is not intended to take place of where your growth is going to go, which is what the map represents translated into density. You have a greater disconnect in the current system than you will ever have with this system because this one really takes into account those environmental constraints.
- Tabb asked when does the County ever provide water lines and streets since the developer builds all of that. Pryor responded that part of the reason is that we have never gone to this type of process where we can predict where the growth is, but we do build and widen roads. The problem is how you set the priority, if we know for example there is going to be growth in Ramona or Alpine, we can start to program those resources to accommodate the growth, take care of the deficient problem we have on the system today and make sure it accommodates what you are doing on the back end. Tabb asked if the County is going to do that at their own costs. Pryor responded that we will have a couple of choices when we do that – if we see that growth occurring, we will probably have an unmet need out there; if there is a developer online, we have the ability to set up an equitable method that each one pays an allotted share for their impacts on the system.
- Coombs asked if we could implement a minimum density in order to facilitate the concentration of growth in urban areas and country towns. Pryor stated that at one time, the Steering Committee did address that issue and they were very nervous about setting a floor. There are advantages to setting a floor but it depends on how the final product comes out.
- Bowlby stated that depending on how the standards are written, for instance clustering, we could continue to step up from the 670,000; a rezone would also allow for stepping up from there. Wanted to make a statement that these areas – wetlands, floodplains, and hillsides should not have had a density yield to begin with – these are areas that are not developable and should not be developed and have tremendous resource value so it makes perfectly good sense to subtract it from the parcel.
- Higgins stated that she still did not understand how you can use a built out area to accommodate the numbers in the density model. Pryor reiterated that we took that land and said it is already built. There are a couple of areas that we did do some checks and saw some areas with large enough parcels that could be further subdivided. We did go ahead and say that could accommodate a bit of additional growth but for the most part we subtract it out because what we are trying to do is come up with a prediction of a population and we want to be sure we have enough land out there to accommodate that population; that is what this model does, it strictly is a method of predicting whether we have enough land to accommodate population that we know is the target.
- Whalen stated there is a practical matter here of what a piece of land can accommodate in a certain area. Pryor responded if you have a piece of rough property, you may have a tough time meeting some of the other standards. If you are out in the backcountry you are going to have a tough time

getting down below a 2 acre lot because of the need for a well or a septic system on the site. If on the other hand you can get a package treatment plant and you have a municipal water supply then you could probably meet your yield because you could design for that and get it to work. Again that is where you are starting to get to a specific piece of property and all rules are going to be applied equally across the board and not all pieces of the ground are equal and that is the difference that is confusing some people, that there is still going to be physical limitations to each property regardless of what density we put on the property.

- Whalen questioned reducing the number of units that can be built on a piece of property per zoning before running the population model. Holler replied that essentially, the intent of this model we have been referring to is to mimic additional regulations that would be in effect at a later date. We have set something up to predict losses that occur in the process but this is just a model. The model itself is not a limit. It has constraints built in it that are intended to reflect what may come out a little farther down the road. If the standards are being proposed to change, the potential number will change. So this is nothing more than a prediction at this point. We still have the opportunity to affect some change to these standards however there are certain realities associated with some of the change. Scarborough stated the standards discussion is next on our agenda.
- Scarborough wanted to shift understanding that the predictive model is what it is, it gives us a number, high or low, depending on the standards which is a discussion to follow. The group's opportunity today is to give direction to staff for an Interest Group map that will identify what this committee collectively needs to have for a model run, to see the map again with more information for further modification and discussion.
- Stedt stated that he would like to see the standards be discussed before going forward with the modeling. Pryor stated that we have a schedule to meet; we are not going to go through all of these standards and delay the process. This is an iterative process, we can start with this one and at the same time we can discuss wetlands and everything else that is on here. If you change one of these standards, since we have been very conservative, it will probably make the population go up.
- Stehly asked what would be the error rate, plus or minus, if we were to look at a small area vs. the whole community. Pryor replied the model is probably plus or minus 5% in terms of its prediction on a county-wide basis, but the smaller you take it down, the larger the amount of error you have because we were not looking to analyze parcel by parcel. We are trying to deal in very general macro terms to know we have enough space allocated for the future growth we are anticipating.
- Messer expressed that it is very important the group proceeds because the group's strength is in their product and coherence. Added the only way we are going to influence the process is if we stay upfront and if staff is willing to run a model on the basis of a map we have put forward.
- Pryde stated there is one thing that is going to raise the number far over, which is something we do not have any control over, the assumption that the number per unit is 3. If further down the road that number is 2.8 or 3.2, that is going to make a huge difference and his guess is that that number is going to go up for lots of reason, but the main one being, with the cost of housing people are going to cram in, rent rooms, and illegally convert garages. There is not much we can do about it but that number is going to go up. Pryor responded that persons per household does vary depending on where you are at in the county and we have factored that information in, we actually tried to match what was in the areas. Pryde added that as the cost of housing goes up, the younger people may be looking towards the backcountry to find houses and relocating families.
- Higgins asked how groundtruthing really affected the density on the regional land use map since some changes were made to Alpine and some other areas. Holler stated that staff met with the those that worked on the groundtruthing effort for Alpine and in some cases, staff agreed to what they were saying. We reported two or three times that we have made some adjustments to the model, further constraining it, however, we did not agree with the conclusion that they have drawn for a number of reasons. In any case, the groundtruthing efforts were based on assumptions made by applying the current code ordinances, as opposed to looking at changes that we have been talking about, so in a very real sense, they have more of a market analysis based on today's market and current code ordinance than groundtruthing. Higgins asked if staff's model is more constrained than those who worked on the groundtruthing efforts. Holler replied we did increase the constraints based on those areas we did agree with them, but in some cases, they are further constraining land because essentially, they are using their experience with the current codes and ordinances (which are changing through this process) so they are further constraining it. Messer stated that they are doing a market analysis saying they are not going to hit some of these entire densities.
- Higgins stated that if we are going to bring up the issue of groundtruthing, then maybe we should have somebody explain exactly what that is and why this is something we are concerned about.

Holler stated we share that concern and have said all along, that we want to ensure that we have adequate capacity to build to the projections we are getting, but we do not always agree with the conclusions.

- Stedt asked what the next step of detail is. Scarborough replied transportation numbers; we will see the map in a month or so with more numbers, furthering our ability to modify it. Stedt contemplated the notion of an invalid EIR due to traffic numbers going up, creating a document we can no longer support ourselves. Pryor responded that that was a quantum leap from where we are in the process to an EIR. The next step, at this point, will be to apply the road transportation network. Because we were conservative, if some major change occurs, it will only raise the population and the traffic. We are going to look at that map and if all those maps indicate roads are operating at a level of E and F, we have a few choices – we can reduce the population further because we cannot afford to build the roads or we can decide we are going to build the roads, but with that comes responsibility as to how we get them funded. Or we shift the population from one area that has inadequate roads to an area with better roads or take it and live with an LOS E during the peak hours of traffic and reduce the LOS on the road system. You cannot make those kinds of choices until you know what you are dealing with and that is what we are trying to get to – the ability to make some decisions.
- Bowlby asked if the modeling will include impacts to groundwater dependent and biologically sensitive areas and if it will be included in the modeling that goes out to the communities. Pryor responded that we have to have an EIR that explains every impact we are going to have, whether or not it is going to be mitigated and agreed to it going out to the communities.
- Chase asked if the village core population, which is mostly in built areas, is going to be fed into the transportation model considering the population yield does not count redevelopment or infill. Pryor responded that we are going to factor in the population into the traffic model and the distribution so we can see the worst-case scenario on the road system. Chase asked if the worst-case would include additional yield above the 660,000. Pryor replied not on redevelopment because we cannot predict that; we have a density range that we can work with but redevelopment is nothing more than an implementing tool. Whalen was concerned with how this can be done since the only time redevelopment occurs is when there is enough residual land value created by redevelopment to pay for the cost of doing it. Pryor responded that we are still at this macro scale looking at the region; we want to see what the regional network looks like. The community level has much more detail and there, we will be looking at what it does to the roads that the community carries. He added that from a land use planning standpoint, we will say what is realistic for this community character and given the distribution of what we have said, pour it into the model. Stated that what is being applied is a general plan and we know there is going to be a margin of error. That is acceptable in terms of the kind of process we are doing because what you are really trying to do is set that broader framework. Thinks that we are struggling with this notion of the macro level since we are used to dealing on a project by project basis, but we are trying to come up with a regional network of roads to figure out which ones are efficient and which ones are not, and where we can put the roads and the linkages. The margin of error is probably going to be infinitesimal until we really start to look at the whole regional network.

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- Silver stated that this level of information, related to the model, would not go into the EIR or go into the EIR as something that would reflect whatever the adopted standards are, a much more refined level of detail. Holler agreed.
- **Motion:** Messer moved that staff take both maps (whenever ready), incorporate them according to the Interest Group principles, and proceed with the model. Chase seconded the motion.
- Bowlby stated that at the end of the last meeting, he was in the process of bringing forth a list of the research that the Sierra Club had done on the map but needed time to reconcile with EHL and others. Messer included Bowlby's conditions in staff's review for the creation of the next map.
- Silver thinks the working maps should reflect as much to the extent possible, the Interest Group principles. Added the group does not really have any fundamental conflicts going around the table – there is agreement on equity, creating an edge, cleaning up the countryside outside of the edge, accommodating growth and that the capacity of the units, agreed upon, should be built within the villages of the semi-rural. Thinks that if there are proposed changes staff believes are not consistent or felt the group got wrong, those changes should not go forward. However, if they are consistent, even if they might be different interpretations, proposed that their map be incorporated in the next iteration.

- Gendron stated that she wanted to put in the record that the upzone in Tecate is completely inconsistent and felt it should be added to the list of things that should be changed because of inadequate infrastructure. Scarborough stated that Tecate is on there.
- Whalen asked how staff proposes to reconcile the differences in opinion on groundtruthing. Holler stated that he thinks we have done part of that with the modeling techniques we have used and going beyond that, was willing to talk about staff's concerns if it had not been done enough. He asked if staff would be able to bring some more information back here to ease some concern about this. Whalen proposed that staff do that for Alpine, Ramona, Valley Center, and Lakeside; Alpine being of the highest level of concern, having the most effort put into it. These are the big four for him because they basically are the areas that we are going to be accepting intensity. Holler replied that he was unsure of staff's ability to get all four in a timely fashion but extended the offer to have Whalen come in and go over his conclusions and work with staff.
- Higgins suggested that either Ron Pennock or someone else give a presentation on Alpine, in order for the group to understand why groundtruthing was done and why it is a concern.
- Silver asked if the group could get an "Interest Group map" forward with the traffic modeling using the predictive population model that was given to them (which is very conservative), incorporating those changes that are consistent with their principles, and then get the reality check as you go over those four major areas Whalen mentioned as we move forward onto the standards discussion where we will actually deal with some of these issues in terms of policy.
- Pryde asked when staff plans on giving their comments on Silver's map. Holler replied that staff has done some analysis but is reticent commenting on that until there is another proposal by the development community. Pryde asked if there is such a map and when it will be shown. Whalen replied that they had wanted to hear this discussion to better understand what they are going to produce. Thinks it can be done in a matter of days and will be available before the next meeting.
- Bowlby was concerned with leaving the reconciliation of the two maps entirely with staff. Scarborough replied that she has seen this alluded to rough, possibility of a map and the one that Silver has presented; there are not a whole lot of areas that clash – generally, one shows areas that possibly need to be less dense and the other shows areas that need to be more intense. Stated that we will look at the clash areas at our next round as the traffic information will enable us to have a more detailed conversation in reconciling those clash points.
- Bowlby stated he thinks we need to find out where the clash areas are before going forward with the map and that staff needs more information.
- Stedt was concerned that the decision to move forward may be premature as the reconciliation should take place before the modeling. Scarborough responded that Pryor has stated this is iterative; this model run is not the end model run, there will be other model runs so it is more to get transportation numbers to add to our conversation.
- Chase wanted to clarify that there is also community input in this reconciliation process. Scarborough agreed that that is going on, however, at this juncture, we need reconciliation on the Interest Group first. Chase thought staff was reconciling the communities' input at the same time. Holler replied that staff is reviewing the comments received from the communities but is not in the position where we could bring everyone together and reconcile all the issues in one document. Chase stated that she is not sure it would help to keep the separation there when it could be reconciled sooner. Scarborough replied that if it gets down to that, we will want to have transportation in our pocket of tools.
- Coombs stated she thinks we should be moving forward and has confidence that we have provided concepts A, B, C and D and a whole list of principles will give guidance to staff for the proposed changes and reconciling. Also proposed being notified of when the real estate group's map is ready for viewing.
- Bowlby asked for the motion again. Scarborough stated her understanding is that staff will take the two maps, one from the environmental group and one from the real estate industry, which is to be done in a week, reconcile those against our planning principles and regional categories that the group has met and talked about, run it through the transportation model, bring it back to this table for further discussion on the clash areas to reconcile them with transportation numbers. Chase asked for a written description of the areas in addition to the email notification. Messer replied that she thinks the group will have ample opportunity to review it as it has been a very open process so far. Reminded everyone that it is not going to have a big impact on the modeling. Silver clarified that this motion is not supposed to be a reconciliation with where the community groups are at but rather, an Interest Group principles map that takes map changes from both sides and incorporates them where those things are consistent with the principles.

- Stedt stated that he is going to support the motion with grave trepidation. Whalen commented that he as well, had grave misgivings due to the groundtruthing.
- Coombs requested to add water to future agenda items as it can impact the discussion on standards.
- **Vote:** Unanimous vote in favor of the motion.

### **Agenda Item III: Process –**

#### **a) Status & Next Steps**

- Scarborough asked if the group wanted to keep on the every other week schedule in September. At the next meeting, we will have groundtruthing and a discussion on proxies as requested by Stehly.
- Chase asked about her two goals and policies and whether it would be best to have them emailed for comments.
- Stehly mentioned there are enough people here to discuss the proxy issue. Scarborough stated that it was her prerogative as the chair to allow proxies instead of changing alternates due to the critical juncture of trust building in creating a team. Stated that if we want to revisit changing alternates at this time, we can and we know at this time, there are four or five people that need to change alternates. Stedt stated that due to the change in the context of the discussion, he thinks we need to open up the ability to have replacements of alternates at this time. Scarborough requested that those who have vacant or absentee alternate spots to submit them in writing to staff as they are the DCAO's decision to make. Stepner stated that he does not think we should have proxies but if we are going to have alternates, they should be people who are tuned in, who attend and are part of the process. Scarborough stated that the policy now will be one proxy per member if by chance, neither member or alternate can attend.
- Tabb proposed retaining the existing schedule of every other Tuesday, beginning September 10<sup>th</sup>. After contemplating everyone's conflicting schedules, there was a general agreement with this schedule.

### **Agenda Item IV: Public Comments –**

- Dave Shibley asked what the trigger is for having the transportation modeling done if the group is not going to meet until September. Scarborough replied that staff is going to do the mapping and the model is going to be run so the 10<sup>th</sup> will include those numbers from that map after a model run.
- Mike Thometz asked if Coombs' request to put water on the agenda was responded to. Scarborough replied that it will not be on the very next agenda; Coombs had asked for it to be put down under future agenda items and yes, it is on that list.
- Dutch Van Dierendonck asked that any of the proposed map procedures be extended to and include the input from the Steering Committee or the planning groups in the areas you are talking about.
- Ron Pennock stated that his group would be happy to come and speak at the next meeting. Mentioned some of the issues for the groundtruthing efforts.